

Tom Wolf

Thomas Westerman Wolf (born November 17, 1948) is an American politician and businessman who has served as the 47th Governor of Pennsylvania since January 20, 2015.^[1] A member of the Democratic Party, he defeated Republican incumbent Tom Corbett in the 2014 gubernatorial election and was re-elected in 2018 by a margin of 17.1%. Prior to his election as Governor, Wolf was the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue from April 2007 to November 2008 and an executive in his family-owned business.

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Early life and education

Wolf was born and raised in Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania, the son of Cornelia Rohlman (née Westerman) (1923–2018) and William Trout Wolf (1921–2016), a business executive.^{[2][3][4]} His hometown was named after his ancestor, who was the town's postmaster.^[5]

He was raised Methodist^[6] but is now affiliated with the Episcopal Church.^[7]

Wolf graduated from The Hill School, a boarding school in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, in 1967.^[8] He went on to receive a B.A. in government,^[9] *magna cum laude*, from Dartmouth College in 1972, an M.Phil. from the University of London in 1978, and a Ph.D. in political

Tom Wolf



47th Governor of Pennsylvania

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 20, 2015

Lieutenant Mike Stack
John Fetterman

Preceded by Tom Corbett

Secretary of Revenue of Pennsylvania

In office

April 25, 2007 – November 30, 2008

Governor Ed Rendell

Preceded by Gregory Fajt

Succeeded by Stephen Stetler

Personal details

Born Thomas Westerman Wolf
November 17, 1948
Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania, U.S.

Political party Democratic

Spouse(s) Frances Donnelly (m. 1975)

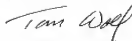
Children 2

Education Dartmouth College (BA)
University of London (MPhil)

science^[10] from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1981.^[11] While a student at Dartmouth, Wolf joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in India.^{[12][13][14]}

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (PhD)

Signature



Website

Government website (<http://gov.ernor.pa.gov>)

After earning his Ph.D., his dissertation on the United States House of Representatives was named the best of 1981 by the American Political Science Association.^[15]

Wolf turned down an opportunity to interview for a tenure-track faculty position at Harvard University to begin his career at The Wolf Organization as manager of a True Value store owned by the company.^[15]

He met his wife, Frances, at school and married her in 1975. They have two adult daughters.^[16]

Business and early political career

He purchased The Wolf Organization in 1985 with two partners. During the administration of Governor Robert P. Casey, Wolf served on an economic development board and on the Pennsylvania Legislative Commission on Urban Schools.^[17]

After selling his company to a private equity firm in 2006, Wolf was nominated in January 2007 by then-Governor Ed Rendell to be the Secretary of Revenue of Pennsylvania. He served in that position on Rendell's cabinet from his April 2007 confirmation by the Pennsylvania State Senate until resigning in November 2008.^{[10][11][13]} He had planned to run for Governor of Pennsylvania in the 2010 election, but ultimately did not in order to repurchase the Wolf Organization, which was facing bankruptcy.^{[10][13][17]} Wolf continued to serve as an executive in The Wolf Organization until his election as governor. He served as chairman and chief executive officer until stepping down from the latter position in December 2013 to focus on his gubernatorial campaign^[18] and from the board altogether in December 2014 following his election.^[19]

Wolf serves as chair of the York County United Way, the York County Community Foundation, the York College board of trustees, and as chairman of the York County Chamber of Commerce. He has also been active in the York Jewish Community Center, the Memorial Hospital of York, and a regional public television system.^[20]

Governor of Pennsylvania

2014 election

On April 2, 2013, Wolf announced his candidacy for Governor of Pennsylvania in the 2014 election. He pledged \$10 million of his personal wealth toward the primary election, with an intent to raise at least \$5 million from supporters throughout the state. He was the third person to announce candidacy, following John Hanger of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and Max Meyers, a minister from Cumberland County, but at least four others were expected to join the race.^[21]

By March 2014, several polls suggested Wolf was the front-runner in the race for the Democratic nomination following an extensive television campaign.^{[22][23]} A Franklin & Marshall College poll conducted in late February 2014 showed Wolf with a 27-point lead over his nearest competitor, Allyson Schwartz,^[24] and a Harper poll showed him leading Schwartz by 26 percentage points,^[25] as did an additional Franklin & Marshall poll in late March 2014.^[26]

In late April and early May, Wolf faced attacks from fellow candidate Rob McCord over his association with controversial former York, Pennsylvania, mayor Charlie Robertson.^[27] Allyson Schwartz also accused Wolf's campaign of plagiarizing his "Fresh Start" plan from an energy equipment company.^[28] Despite the attacks, a Muhlenberg College/*Morning Call* poll suggested Wolf continued to lead with 38% to Schwartz's 13% and McCord's 11%.^[29]

In the May 20 primary, Wolf defeated Schwartz, McCord, and Katie McGinty to win the Democratic nomination for governor. He faced incumbent Republican Governor Tom Corbett in the November general election.^[30] Heading into the final two months of the campaign, a number of polls indicated a varying but consistent advantage for Wolf over Corbett. Although Corbett slightly narrowed the deficit as the election approached, Wolf maintained a persistent lead in the race.^{[31][32][33][34]} On November 4, Wolf was elected governor with 54.9% of the vote.^{[35][36]} Wolf's victory was notable for engaging traditionally Republican areas of the state. Insiders have attributed this phenomenon to Regional Field Director Brendan Murray and his extensive relationship network in north-central Pennsylvania.^[37] Wolf is the first challenger to oust a sitting governor since governors became eligible for immediate reelection in 1968.



Wolf takes the oath of office as Governor on January 20, 2015

First term

Wolf assumed office as the 47th Governor of Pennsylvania upon the expiration of Corbett's term on January 20, 2015, with the inaugural ceremony occurring in front of the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg.^[38] Upon taking office, Wolf opted not to move into the Pennsylvania Governor's Residence but instead commuting from his home in York. A spokesman for Wolf said the residence would still be used for official events and other functions.^[39] Shortly after being sworn in, Wolf signed two executive orders banning gifts to state employees and requiring a bidding process for outside legal contracts.^[40] Wolf also restored a ban on hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", in state parks^[41] and placed a moratorium on the death penalty in Pennsylvania.^[42] The most significant executive action in his first days in office was his move to fully expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act.



Governor Wolf as he signs an executive order to ban fracking in state parks on January 29, 2015, while others look on

Wolf proposed his first budget in March 2015, which included an increase in education spending, reductions in property taxes and the corporate tax, and a new severance tax on natural gas.^[43] Six months into his tenure, in July 2015, the websites OnTheIssues and InsideGov named Wolf the most liberal incumbent governor in the United States, based on a rating of public statements and press releases among other measures; Wolf rejected this assessment, arguing that his policies are directed by practicality rather than ideology.^{[44][45]}

On July 1, 2015, Wolf vetoed a budget submitted to him by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, causing a budget dispute between the governor's office and the legislature. This marked the first time a Pennsylvania governor vetoed a budget bill in its entirety since Milton Shapp did so in 1976.^[46] Wolf argued the budget was not balanced, disputing Republicans' claim that it would provide increased funding in certain areas without raising taxes.^{[47][48]} A point of dispute in the budget process was the

proposed privatization of Pennsylvania's wine and liquor sales, which Wolf opposes.^[49] The state operated without a full budget for 267 days—the longest period without a full budget in Pennsylvania history—until the 2015-16 budget became law without Wolf's signature in March 2016.^{[50][51]}

In January 2016, at the Elizabethtown College, Wolf announced the launch of the "It's On Us PA" campaign, which aims to expand awareness of sexual assault in schools and on college campuses.^{[52][53]} This announcement made Pennsylvania the first state to implement a statewide campaign that called for a collaboration of schools, law enforcement, victim services organizations, and other community members to promote awareness, education, and bystander intervention of sexual violence specifically on school campuses.^[54] Several schools, including Franklin and Marshall College, Butler County Community College, as well as the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Chancellor Frank Brogan signed on to the initiative. On November 30, 2016, Wolf announced the awarding of "It's On Us PA" grants of one million dollars to 36 post-secondary schools in the state to combat sexual violence on their campuses. Programs considered for funding included but were not limited to those that enhanced awareness of available resources as well as the rights of students and, most importantly, to increase mechanisms for anonymous reporting.^[55]



Wolf's first gubernatorial portrait

Wolf has expressed his opposition to targeting countries with economic sanctions or boycotts, saying, "We ... will not encourage economic punishment in place of peaceful solutions to challenging conflicts."^[56]

He has signed into law bills that legalized medical marijuana in Pennsylvania, reformed pensions, and expanded the number of offenses former criminal defendants could get sealed, among other legislation.

On February 24, 2016, Wolf announced that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. Because it was diagnosed early, he said it would not hinder his ability to work.^[57] Following treatment, Wolf's spokesperson announced in January 2017 that Wolf's physician had given him a "clean bill of health".^[58]

Wolf declared Pennsylvania's heroin and opioid addiction crisis a statewide emergency in January 2018. Pennsylvania became the eighth state to do so. Such a declaration lets Pennsylvania officials "override any current rules or regulations they perceive as hampering the state's ability to address the opioid epidemic".^[59]

During his time in office, he eliminated the "capital stock tax," which is a tax on the value of a business's assets.^[60]

2018 election

Wolf successfully ran for re-election to a second term in 2018 and was uncontested in the Democratic primary.^[61] He defeated Republican State Senator Scott Wagner in the general election on November 8, 2018, with approximately 57% of the vote.^[62] He is the first Pennsylvania governor to win election twice while losing both times in his home county (since 1968, when a new state constitution permitted governors to run for consecutive terms).^[63]

Second term

In 2019, Wolf signed legislation that would allow no-excuse mail-in ballot voting.^[64]

In July 2020, State Representative Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler) introduced several articles of impeachment against Gov. Wolf.^[65]

Electoral history

2014 Democratic gubernatorial primary results ^[66]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	Democratic	Tom Wolf	488,917	57.86
	Democratic	<u>Allyson Schwartz</u>	149,027	17.64
	Democratic	<u>Rob McCord</u>	142,311	16.84
	Democratic	<u>Kathleen McGinty</u>	64,754	7.66
Total votes			845,009	100

2014 Pennsylvania gubernatorial election ^[67]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	Democratic	Tom Wolf	1,920,355	54.93
	Republican	<u>Tom Corbett (incumbent)</u>	1,575,511	45.07
Total votes			3,495,866	100
	Democratic gain from Republican			

2018 Pennsylvania gubernatorial election ^[68]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	Democratic	Tom Wolf (incumbent)	2,850,210	57.7
	Republican	<u>Scott Wagner</u>	2,015,266	40.8
	Other	<u>Other</u>	75,916	1.5
Total votes			4,941,342	100
	Democratic hold			

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External links

- **Governor Tom Wolf** (<https://www.governor.pa.gov/>) official government site
- **Tom Wolf for Governor** (<https://www.wolfforpa.com/>) official campaign site
- Tom Wolf (https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Pennsylvania/Government/Executive/Governor_Tom_Wolf) at Curlie
- **Appearances** (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?tomwolf>) on C-SPAN
- **Profile** (<https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/77203>) at Vote Smart

Party political offices		
Preceded by Dan Onorato	Democratic nominee for Governor of Pennsylvania 2014, 2018	Most recent
Political offices		
Preceded by Tom Corbett	Governor of Pennsylvania 2015–present	Incumbent
U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)		
Preceded by Mike Pence <i>as Vice President</i>	Order of Precedence of the United States Within Pennsylvania	Succeeded by Mayor of city in which event is held
		Succeeded by Otherwise Nancy Pelosi <i>as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives</i>
Preceded by John Carney <i>as Governor of Delaware</i>	Order of Precedence of the United States Outside Pennsylvania	Succeeded by Phil Murphy <i>as Governor of New Jersey</i>

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